

Attachment
NO IM 2000-054

Preliminary Draft Strategic Plan

Fiscal Years 2001-2005

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management



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December 1999

Draft Letter from the Director

Dear Reader,

I'm pleased to present the Bureau of Land Management's most recent Strategic Plan -- a document that charts the overall direction of the Nation's oldest land management agency for the next several years.

The BLM is entrusted with administering a vast amount of public land -- 264 million acres in 12 western states -- an area bigger than Texas, Oklahoma, and all of New England combined. In addition, the agency manages 370 million acres of subsurface mineral estate located throughout the country. The value of this huge body of public assets can be measured in terms of people's enjoyment of BLM's wide open spaces, and in terms of the productivity and economic worth of public lands to local communities and our National treasury.

Today the BLM is facing difficult times. The last ten years have seen a dramatic increase in the demands placed on both the lands and BLM's workforce. The rapidly growing population and changing demographics of the West, coupled with stagnant budgets and a decreasing number of employees, strains BLM's ability to effectively and efficiently manage our country's great public lands.

For example, the public looks increasingly to BLM-managed lands for recreation opportunities. In the lower 48 states, nearly two-thirds of BLM public lands are within an hour's drive of urban areas. With this newfound appreciation comes increased pressures. Today, our ability to provide this expanding population with safe recreational visits is impaired.

At the same time, growing awareness and support for clean air, clean water, open space and habitat for threatened and endangered species means that BLM's multiple use mandate is now much broader than in previous years -- making our aging land use planning base badly in need of updating. The public's demand for the protection of our Nation's special areas -- those with exceptional historical, geological, or scenic qualities -- is also growing. Without up-to-date land use plans, we are unable to ensure these special areas are given the attention they need.

So what is the answer? Until we are able to secure the resources we need to stem this developing crisis, the BLM needs our stakeholders' patience and support -- beginning with a change in expectations. The BLM has long been known as the "can-do" agency. Unfortunately, we are fast becoming the agency that "could, but increasingly can't."

We are an agency proud of our mission, our history, and our accomplishments. Our employees are committed to doing their best as public land stewards. But we cannot indefinitely continue to do more with less. Sometimes, we have to acknowledge that we will be doing less with less.

I fully believe that we *can* overcome these obstacles. But we cannot do it alone. Today, we look to you to help us ensure that we are passing on this great public land legacy to our children and grandchildren.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

December 20, 1999

In Reply Refer To:
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Ref. IM No. 98-198

EMS TRANSMISSION 12/21/99
Instruction Memorandum No. 2000-054
Expires: 09/30/2001

To: Executive Leadership Team, Associate State Directors, Center Directors
From: Acting Director
Subject: Review of Preliminary Draft Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2001-2005
DD: 01/21/2000

Attached for your review and comment is the Preliminary Draft Strategic Plan for FY 2001-2005. Please distribute this to appropriate managers, analysts, program leads, and budget personnel.

Background

Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, we are required to revise our national strategic plan at least every three years. The Department of the Interior and the Office of Management and Budget have asked us to complete our strategic plan for FY 2001-2005 early in calendar year 2000.

Over the last 12 months, we have held three Washington Office/Field meetings to develop proposed revisions to our existing strategic plan -- an initial scoping meeting in Reno last December and two follow-up meetings in San Antonio and Phoenix. In these meetings, we were guided by several objectives. We wanted to simplify the structure of the plan and reduce the number of performance goals and measures we have to track; we wanted to focus the goals where possible on outcomes that are meaningful to the American people and our employees; and, we wanted to make sure that our performance targets accurately reflect our capability. In these meetings, we also wanted to clarify the links between our strategic plan, our re-engineered budget process, and the new program element outputs we are using to collect and analyze management cost data. The proposed long-term goals resulting from these meetings were distributed in September for Bureauwide review in Instruction Memorandum No. 99-198.

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Using the feedback from this review, we have prepared the attached preliminary draft strategic plan following the prescribed Departmental format. Unlike the document we circulated for review in September, the primary audience for this plan is the Department, the Office of Management and Budget, the General Accounting Office, and the Congress.

Focus of the Review

Please keep the following general questions in mind when reviewing the plan and preparing your comments:

- ▶ Are BLM's eight mission-related goals and organizational effectiveness strategies compelling? In your view, is the plan comprehensive? Does it convey our priorities?
- ▶ Are any goals inconsistent with others, or would they be difficult to implement together?
- ▶ Does the plan adequately describe the challenges, opportunities, capabilities, and needs the BLM faces today?
- ▶ Are the strategies to achieve the goals meaningful, given the audience? Are there strategies or cross-cutting relationships that should be added or deleted?
- ▶ Is it clear we are anticipating declining performance if budgets remain static?
- ▶ Are there major constituent groups who might feel that key issues were not addressed or who might have concerns with the plan? Please describe any potential concerns.

Other Agencies

It may help to consider other agencies goals and strategies. The Forest Service has posted their Draft Strategic Plan on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/plan>. The National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service plans are not yet available for review. You may want to contact their local offices for their goals.

Next Steps

Upon receipt of your comments, we will make appropriate changes and then discuss the Strategic Plan with Members of Congress and constituent groups. The Annual Performance Plan for FY 2001 will reflect the revised Strategic Plan's goals. The Strategic Plan should be finalized by September 2000.

Please submit your comments via e-mail to Carl Zulick at carl_zulick@blm.gov. Questions concerning the attached material may be directed to either Kit Muller, Pam Cleary, or Carl Zulick. Their respective telephone numbers are (202) 208-5922, (202) 452-5196, and (202) 452-5158. Thank you for your help in improving the Plan.

Signed by:
Tom Fry
Acting Director

Authenticated by:
Robert M. Williams
Directives, Records
& Internet Group, WO540

1 Attachment

1 - Draft Strategic Plan (50 pp)

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I. Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages over 264 million acres of land — about one-eighth of the land in the United States — and more than 634 million acres of subsurface mineral resources. Most of these lands are located in the West, including Alaska, and are dominated by extensive grasslands, forests, high mountains, arctic tundra, and deserts. The BLM is responsible for the management and use of a wide variety of resources on these lands, including energy and minerals, timber, forage, wild horse and burro populations, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation sites, wilderness areas, and archaeological and historical sites.

The BLM's origins go back to the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. These laws provided for the survey and settlement of the lands that the original 13 states ceded to the Federal government after the Revolutionary War. As additional lands were acquired from Spain, France, and other countries, Congress directed that they be explored, surveyed, and made available for settlement. In 1812, Congress established the General Land Office in the Department of the Treasury to oversee the disposition of these Federal lands. As the 19th century progressed and the Nation's land base expanded further west, Congress enacted a wide variety of laws to encourage settlement and development. These laws included military bounties; grants for the construction of wagon roads, canals, and railroads; the Homesteading laws; the Mining Law of 1872; the Desert Lands Act of 1877; and the Timber and Stone Act of 1878.

The creation of the first national parks, national forests, and wildlife refuges in the late 19th century signaled a shift in philosophy. By withdrawing these lands from settlement, Congress made it clear that they were to remain under Federal ownership and management for the benefit of all.

In the interest of resource conservation, Congress enacted a number of laws early in the 20th century directing the Executive Branch to manage activities on the public lands. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 provided for retention of mineral-bearing lands as well as leasing of, exploration for, and production of selected commodities such as coal, oil, gas, and sodium. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 established the U.S. Grazing Service to manage the public rangelands. The Oregon and California Revested Lands Act of 1937 addressed timber production and other uses on reverted railroad lands in western Oregon.

The Grazing Service was merged with the General Land Office in 1946 to form the Bureau of Land Management within the Department of the Interior. At that time, there were more than 2,000 unrelated and often conflicting laws concerning management of the public lands. The BLM had no unified legislative mandate until Congress enacted the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

In FLPMA, Congress recognized the value of the remaining public lands to the American people and declared that these lands generally would remain in public ownership. Congress also codified the principle of "multiple use" management, defined as "management of the public lands and their various resource values so they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people."

While adhering to this multiple use mandate, the BLM's management of the public lands has evolved over the last 20 years in response to new Congressional directives and court decisions, changing demand patterns, and a maturing understanding of what is required to use natural resources on a sustainable basis.

The BLM performs a wide variety of functions in managing the public lands, including taking inventory of resources; preparing land use plans and assessing environmental impacts; conducting land surveys; issuing use authorizations; enforcing permit conditions; designing and constructing roads and improvements; restoring degraded fish and wildlife habitat; identifying and managing significant natural, cultural, and recreational resources; protecting public resources; and monitoring use. In addition, the BLM maintains the original property title and cadastral survey records of the United States. All of these activities are conducted with extensive public participation and in coordination with other Federal agencies; State, Tribal, and local governments; and other affected interests.

The BLM is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with field offices primarily in the western United States. It also operates six National Centers specializing in training, fire management support, resource sciences, human resources management, information resources management, and business and fiscal services.

The Challenges

The Bureau of Land Management's spending power has been declining for years while the complexity and cost of our work has been rising. The population of the West is exploding, creating new and expanded demands for the public lands and increasing the breadth of BLM's constituent and customer base. Public expectations are evolving due to better availability of information, and there is increasing public interest in participating in BLM decision-making processes. The legal framework is becoming more complex and lawsuits are an everyday reality. Resource conditions are changing, and our understanding of natural resource management has matured.

The BLM's capabilities are static if not declining. In the last ten years, the BLM's workforce has declined nationally from more than 10,000 employees to about 8,900 in 1999, while its budget remained effectively static. The BLM has worked to "do more with less" by developing partnerships to share resources, pursuing cost recovery and fee-for-service opportunities where possible, and focusing on areas of greatest need. At the same time, the BLM has significantly reduced its on-the-ground presence, postponing much resource monitoring work and many assessment and planning activities.

Although the BLM is working more efficiently, the long-range consequences of these strategies are beginning to show. There are new—and often rapidly growing—challenges and threats to the public lands, e.g. listed terrestrial and aquatic species, weeds, fuels build-up, road and trail impacts, and water quality problems. The BLM has an increasing backlog of basic use authorizations such as grazing permits, applications for permits to drill, and rights-of-way applications. At the same time, its information and decision base is becoming increasingly obsolete, thus inhibiting the ability to make decisions on these authorizations. The BLM's public facilities, such as roads and recreational buildings, are deteriorating, and some may become health and safety liabilities. If these trends continue, the BLM can expect decreasing revenues along with increasing injunctions, liabilities, and shortfalls in service and outputs.

The rapidly growing populations of the West have placed new pressures and increased demands on the public lands. The BLM faces challenges in five broad areas:

- **Livability/Community Growth:** The BLM must address the impact of population growth on lands and realty, recreation sites, threatened and endangered species, and cultural resources.

- **Sustainable Resource Decisions:** The BLM must enhance its information base – assessments, plans, and NEPA analyses – so that its decisions are sustainable and legally defensible.
- **Watershed Restoration:** Some of the Nation's highly valuable public lands and resources are at risk from past practices and current threats. There are enormous needs for restoration of watersheds and the resources dependent upon them. However, the BLM is well positioned to promote biological diversity, clean water, and healthy watersheds, and to protect critical habitat that serves a variety of fish and wildlife species.
- **Special Areas:** Many special areas have been congressionally (e.g., National Conservation Areas) or administratively (e.g., Areas of Critical Environmental Concern) designated on BLM-managed public lands. These areas comprise 85.5 million acres, which is more land than the National Park Service manages. Although some overlapping exists in these designation types, Special Management Areas represent one-third of the total public land acreage (264 million acres) that the Bureau manages. Lack of funding means that the BLM is unable to keep up with increased public use and demand on these national heritage assets.
- **Safe Visits:** The BLM maintains buildings, recreation and administrative sites, trails, roads, bridges, and dams. The agency is also responsible for hazardous abandoned mine lands. Funding is critical to ensure the public's protection from these and other hazards.

II. Mission Statement

**It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management
to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands
for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.**

III. Goal Summary

This plan builds on BLM's 1994 Blueprint for the Future and BLM's 1997 Strategic Plan. As portrayed in Figure 1 below, it is organized around three broad goal categories: (1) Serve Current and Future Publics, (2) Restore and Maintain the Health of the Land, and (3) Improve Organizational Effectiveness.

- The first goal area describes the wide variety of goods and services the BLM provides the American people. Such services include opportunities for hunting, fishing, river rafting, and other dispersed recreation activities; the protection of significant natural and cultural heritage resources on the public lands; and opportunities to use the public lands for livestock grazing, timber harvesting, energy and minerals production, and other commercial activities.
- The second goal area outlines what the BLM is doing to restore and maintain the health of the public lands. This includes assessing land health conditions and trends, planning for appropriate public lands uses, and restoring at-risk systems.
- The third goal area focuses on improving organizational effectiveness, including workforce planning, information resource management, sound financial investment strategies, and cooperative working relationships.

These sections of the plan are highly interdependent. For example, the BLM will be able to provide the American people with renewable resource goods and services only if the public lands are healthy. Similarly, the BLM will be able to accomplish its mission goals only if it has an effective organization.

Depending on local circumstances, the goals outlined in these various sections may or may not be complementary. Recreational activities may be complementary with some commercial activities and not others; they may be complementary in some specific geographic areas and not in others.

No attempt has been made to address these geographically specific issues in this plan. Given the significant differences that exist in resource occurrence and demand, the only way to address these issues is at a regional or local level. The BLM relies on its established land use planning procedures to resolve such issues at the field level.

Bureau of Land Management

2001-2005 Strategic Plan Goal Framework

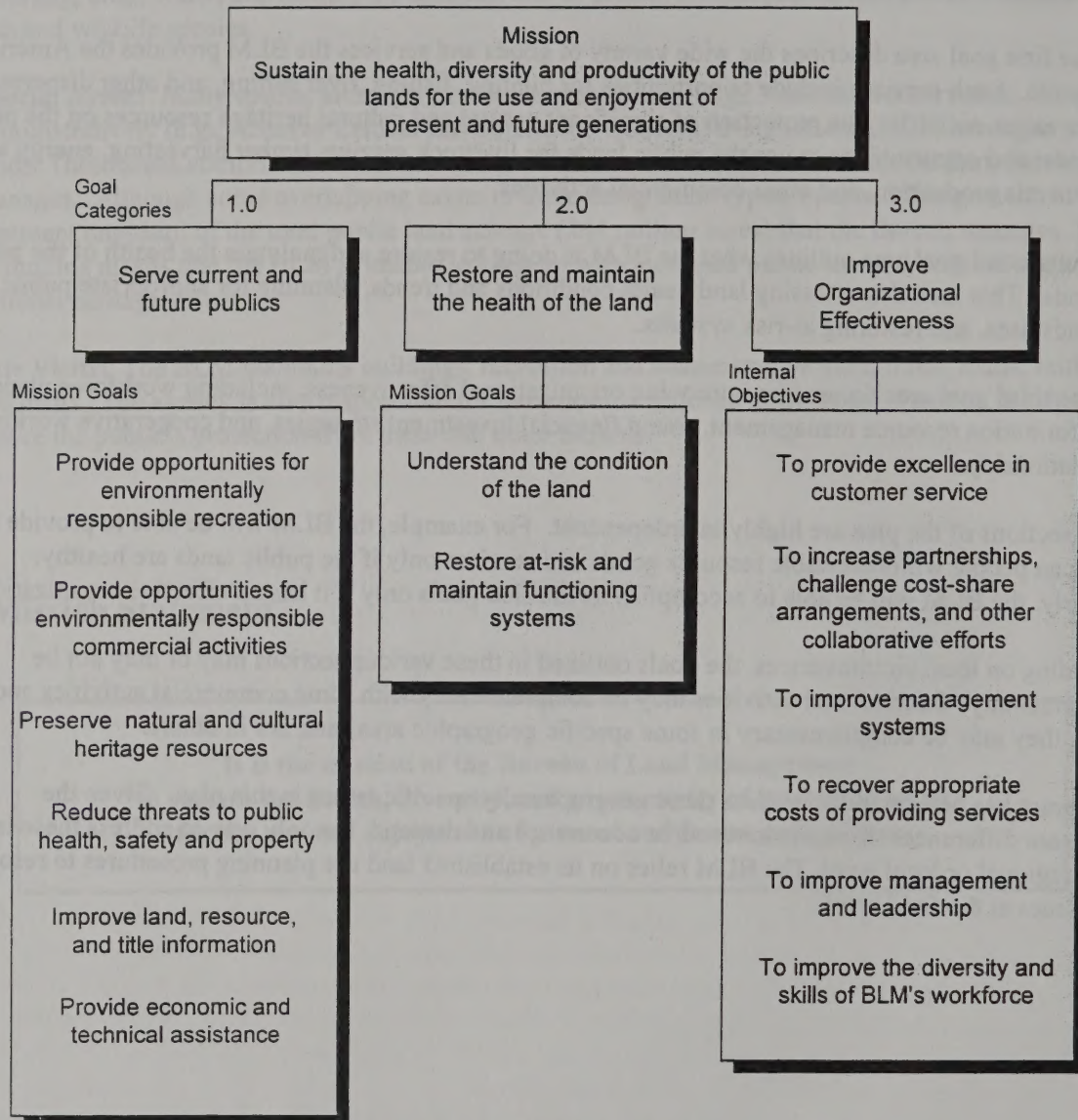


figure 1

Figure 1

Relationship to Department of the Interior Goals

The Bureau of Land Management contributes to the accomplishment of each of the Department's five overarching goals. Major linkages between these Departmental goals and the BLM's goals are presented below:

Departmental Goal	Related BLM Goals
Protect the environment and preserve our Nation's natural and cultural resources.	Restore and maintain the health of the land Preserve natural and cultural heritage; and Reduce threats to public health safety and property.
Provide recreation for America	Provide opportunities for environmentally responsible recreation.
Manage natural resources for a healthy environment and a strong economy.	Provide opportunities for environmentally responsible commercial activities.
Provide science for a changing world.	Improve land, resource and title information
Meet our responsibilities to American Indians.	Provide economic and technical assistance.

IV. Bureau of Land Management Goals

Serve Current and Future Publics

As one of the Nation's principal natural resource management agencies, the Bureau of Land Management provides a variety of goods and services to the public. Many of these are resource-based and tied directly to the public lands. For example, the BLM provides the public with a wide variety of outdoor recreational opportunities, authorizes the use of the public lands for resource commodity production and other commercial activities, protects and preserves nationally significant natural and cultural heritage resources, and enforces Federal laws and regulations related to public lands.

The BLM also shares technical expertise and capabilities with other Federal agencies and with State, Tribal, and local governments. For example, the BLM maintains the Nation's Public Land Survey System, the legal foundation for most of the land records in the United States; assists many Tribal governments in managing their energy and mineral resources; and shares its fire management capabilities with neighboring jurisdictions.

The revenues generated from BLM-managed activities are economically important to the Nation and to the economies of many local communities, primarily in the West. For instance, a significant portion of the \$1.1 billion in revenues generated annually by the public lands is shared with States. The BLM also disburses over \$100 million annually to more than 1,900 counties as payments-in-lieu-of-taxes for the Federal lands that are exempt from taxation.

The mix of goods and services provided by the BLM has evolved over time in response to changes in public demand and new legal mandates. In the 19th century, the agency's predecessor, the General Land Office, was almost exclusively devoted to surveying public domain lands and transferring them to private ownership. In the 20th century, the agency became involved in managing public land use, focusing initially on the production of livestock forage, timber, and energy and mineral commodities. Over the last 20 years, the BLM has increasingly focused on managing for outdoor recreation and scenic values, natural and cultural heritage preservation, and new commercial uses such as communication facilities, waste disposal, and cinematography.

As the population of the Nation grows, demands on the public lands will continue to evolve. As it has in the past, the BLM will become familiar with the needs and expectations of new public land users while encouraging them to understand the needs and expectations of more traditional public land users.

The goods and services the BLM currently provides the American people are discussed in terms of six broad mission goals: (1) *Provide opportunities for environmentally responsible recreation;* (2) *Provide opportunities for environmentally responsible commercial activities;* (3) *Preserve natural and cultural heritage resources;* (4) *Reduce threats to public health, safety, and property;* (5) *Improve land, resource, and title information;* and (6) *Provide economic and technical assistance.*

Provide Opportunities for Environmentally Responsible Recreation

The public lands provide visitors with a wide array of recreational opportunities. These include hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, boating, operating off-highway vehicles, mountain biking, birding, and visiting natural and cultural heritage sites. The BLM provides these opportunities where they are compatible with other authorized land uses, while minimizing risks to public health and safety and maintaining the health and diversity of the land.

The BLM administers over 124,000 miles of fishable streams, 2.9 million acres of lakes and reservoirs, more than 6,400 miles of floatable rivers, more than 500 boating access points, over 60 National Back Country Byways, and 300 Watchable Wildlife sites. The public lands provide habitat for more than 3,000 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, and fish. Big game animals, including elk, pronghorn, mountain sheep, caribou, deer, and moose, live on western public lands, as do waterfowl and many species of small game animals. And the BLM manages over 4,500 miles of National Scenic, Historic, and Recreational Trails, in addition to thousands of miles of multiple use trails that are available for motorcyclists, hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers.

Strategic Issues Related to Recreation

BLM-managed lands and waters are no longer remote: they provide the recreational opportunities that many Westerners enjoy each weekend because the public lands are their own backyard. In the lower 48 states, nearly two-thirds of BLM-managed lands are within an hour's drive of urban areas. These are the authentic wide open spaces of the West and within reach of everyone. However, the public's increased appreciation of the BLM's wide open spaces has also resulted in a number of recreational activities that could cause long-term environmental damage. For example, the increased use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs) is leading to a crisis situation. Many public lands are either undesignated or open for OHV use. While OHV use is a legitimate recreational activity in designated areas, unregulated use can cause long-term environmental damage. Other critical issues include recreation facilities maintenance and environmental education. New residents of the West frequently are just discovering and exploring the natural environment. The BLM must, in conjunction with others, provide increased resource interpretation and environmental education. This will help people moving to the West become active stewards of fragile natural ecosystems and better understand the dangers that remote lands sometimes contain.

Long-Term Goal 1.1: By FY 2005, 65 % of Special Recreation Management Areas are in good condition.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Focus recreation management personnel and funding resources on Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs), which are BLM administrative units established to direct recreation program priorities.
- Use recreation permits to allocate and distribute use in SRMAs, ensuring quality recreation opportunities and decreasing recreation impacts to fragile resources.
- Ensure that OHV designations comply with Executive Orders, regulations, and BLM policy, and that they balance resource protection with recreation opportunities.

- Provide public access to interpretive information about public land resources and the BLM management program so people can responsibly use, protect, and understand natural and cultural resources. BLM staff will identify goals for the interpretive program and periodically evaluate whether text and layout for wayside exhibits are being understood.
- Manage the visual and scenic resources of the public lands to maintain quality recreational, travel, and tourism opportunities.
- Use funds originating from fees, including fee demonstration areas, to correct deficiencies resulting from deferred maintenance.
- Assess SRMAs for safety hazards and undertake corrective measures to correct safety hazards.
- Direct new construction and retrofits toward achieving universal access, and use the Accessibility Data Management System (ADMS) to evaluate and identify correct structural barriers to disabled users.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- This goal assumes level funding and a commensurate gradual reduction in the condition of SRMAs. Significant funding increases or decreases may raise or lower the ability to maintain the percentage of areas in good condition.
- Litigation, changes in regulation or policy, national initiatives, and public interest and involvement may provide direction in the management of off-highway vehicles.
- Continuation of authority to collect fees under the Fee Demonstration Program, or provision of a similar authority under a permanent recreation fee bill, is assumed.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- BLM field offices work closely with surrounding communities and agencies to coordinate interpretive efforts.
- OHV designations will be coordinated area to area with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the National Park Service (NPS), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as appropriate to provide consistency in management.
- BLM currently coordinates fee collection activities with the Forest Service, the Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service.
- BLM works closely with the Forest Service on visual resource management issues.
- BLM works with the Bureau of Reclamation to ensure the refinement and implementation of the Accessibility Data Management System (ADMS) to allow for the assessment of the current level of access provided by existing BLM facilities.

Long-Term Goal 1.2: By FY 2005, 88 % of recreation users are satisfied with recreation on the public lands.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Protect and maintain the natural settings essential to high quality recreation experiences.
- Provide a spectrum of accessible recreation opportunities for a wide range of users.
- Provide appropriate educational and interpretive opportunities to improve recreation users' understanding of the available public land resources, recreation facilities, and potential hazards, and to foster stewardship that ensures the long-term availability of quality recreation opportunities.
- Provide appropriate recreation facilities that are maintained in good condition.

- Revise recreation permitting requirements and processes to facilitate commercial recreation use of the public lands with emphasis on providing quality recreation opportunities.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- This goal assumes level funding and a commensurate gradual reduction in the level of customer satisfaction. Significant funding increases or decreases may raise or lower the ability to satisfy recreation users of BLM-managed land and waters.
- The provision of electronic information through *Recreation.gov* is contingent upon continued support from the Department of the Interior, the entity leading this effort.
- Litigation, changes in regulation or policy, national initiatives, and public interest and involvement may provide direction in the management of off-highway vehicles.
- Destruction and/or loss of the natural settings in which recreation on the public lands takes place will result in a reduction in recreation users' level of satisfaction.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- BLM works with other Department of the Interior (DOI) land management agencies, the U.S. Forest Service, the Corps of Engineers, etc., to provide electronic recreation information through the national *Recreation.gov* web site and several statewide Internet-based recreation information systems.
- BLM has joined with several other Federal agencies, including the NPS, USFS, USFWS, the Corps of Engineers, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), along with the National Association for Interpretation, to form a coordinating body, the Federal Interagency Council on Interpretation, for sharing interpretive ideas and planned agency actions.
- BLM is working with the USFS to provide a single special recreation permit for joint use of BLM and Forest Service lands.

Provide Opportunities for Environmentally Responsible Commercial Activities

The public lands produce products that are key to the Nation's economy, providing economic stability and growth for local and regional economies. Public lands also provide substantial returns to the American people. In 1998, these activities generated \$1.3 billion in revenue. Energy and mineral royalties, rents, bonuses, sales, and fees accounted for nearly \$1.2 billion of the total. The direct and indirect economic impact of energy and mineral production on the public lands amounted to an estimated \$26 billion.

As of 1998, the public lands:

- produced about 31% of the Nation's coal, 47% of its geothermal electrical capacity, 11% of its natural gas, and 5% of its oil.
- produced more than 20% of the Nation's helium and generate more than \$1 million a year by providing fee-for-use storage facilities to the helium industry.

- produced a large portion of the Nation's fertilizer minerals, building and construction materials, industrial clay, gold, silver, and other metals.
- contained 356 coal leases and about 49,700 oil and gas leases, of which 20,000 were producing.
- contained about 300,000 active mining claims.
- produced nearly 13 million cubic yards of sand and gravel and other mineral materials.
- produced 257.5 million board feet of timber, amounting to about 6% of Federal production.
- provided livestock grazing for more than 17,000 operators on about 164 million acres of public land in 16 western states. About 88% of the cattle produced in Idaho, 64% of the cattle in Wyoming, and 63% of the cattle in Arizona grazed at least part of the year on public rangelands.

Every year thousands of companies apply to the BLM to obtain right-of-way (ROW) grants to use public lands, including transmission lines, pipelines, and communications sites, as well as other special leases or permits for uses such as filming. These uses of the public lands are central to the livelihood and culture of many local communities, providing for the basic infrastructure of society.

Strategic Issues Related to Commercial Activities

The nature and scope of commercial activities have changed over time and will continue to evolve as new technologies are developed and as the population increases in the United States, particularly in the West. To accommodate future competing demands on limited resources, the BLM will need to direct even greater effort to maintaining the health of the land. Measures to protect the environment must be strengthened at the planning and leasing/permitting stages. Compliance must be ensured through inspection and enforcement. Public lands can meet multiple-use needs only if the land is kept healthy and productive.

In order for the public lands to continue to provide these commercial benefits, it is essential that the BLM update its land use plans to reflect current needs and uses. Many of the Bureau's land use plans are aging and fail to adequately reflect changing resource conditions and demand patterns. Unless the BLM moves swiftly to update its land use planning base – and ensure that full environmental analyses are performed – commercial activities on the public land may be hampered by litigation, thus making it impossible for business operators to establish long-term plans for their public land sites.

Long-Term Goal 2.1: By 2005, complete 80% of actions on existing energy and mineral leases, permits, and claims on the Federal lands while meeting established land health standards and minimizing future liabilities.

With level budgets, it is difficult for the BLM both to accomplish the workload associated with existing leases and permits and to conduct the reviews required to meet the demand for new leases. Accordingly, during the period covered by this plan the allocation of available resources in the BLM's energy and mineral programs will be guided by the following criteria: (1) meeting contractual obligations on existing leases and permits (including inspections) will take priority over issuing new leases; (2) lease transfers will be authorized only with sufficient bonding to ensure the eventual reclamation of the area; (3) oil and gas idle/inactive wells will be reviewed to ensure timely plugging and abandonment; and

(4) new leases and permits will be issued only where the supporting planning and NEPA documents incorporate current information and reflect our understanding of conditions and trends. Leasing that supports existing operations and obligations will be processed before other leasing requests.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Emphasize compliance and enforcement actions for approved permits and plans of operations and for unauthorized occupations of the public lands.
- Provide training for the oil and gas industry on "technically and administratively complete" APDs to reduce processing delays.
- Review idle/inactive oil and gas wells for timely plugging and surface restoration to prevent a proliferation of "orphan" wells.
- Adjudicate mining claims for compliance with the location and maintenance fee annual requirements. Collection of fees and land status determinations will be emphasized.
- Complete the Congressional Five-Year Plan by September 30, 2001, for grandfathered mineral patent applications as directed by Public Law 104-134.
- Emphasize mineral material sales in communities requiring priority access to construction aggregates.
- Prevent unauthorized removal of mineral materials from the public lands, aggressively pursuing and adjudicating trespass when it occurs.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- Legal challenges to the adequacy of the Bureau's planning and NEPA documents may make it difficult to approve permits and plans of operation and to issue new leases.
- Anticipated retirements of senior personnel will reduce the Bureau's on-the ground capacity to examine mining claims and to inspect existing leases, permits, and plans of operation for compliance.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The Minerals Management Service works with the BLM to ensure energy and mineral production accountability.
- The USFS is a partner in all energy and mineral leasing activities on their lands.
- The BLM has established cooperative agreements with State oil and gas regulatory bodies to review idle/inactive wells.

Program evaluations:

There have been several recent Office of the Inspector General and General Accounting Office audits and evaluations of the Bureau's energy and mineral programs.

- Administrative Cost Recovered through Net Receipts Sharing Deductions, BLM/MMS
- Audit of Issuance of Mineral Patents, BLM/SOL
- Audit of Trespass on Public lands
- Sale of Materials from Public Lands
- Unauthorized Activities on Mining Claims
- Management of the Drainage Protection Program
- Audit of Royalty Rate Reductions for the Stripper Oil Properties Program, BLM/MMS
- 1992 Audit of Inactive/Idle Oil and Gas Wells

Long-Term Goal 2.2: By 2005, support rural communities in the West and achieve healthy, sustainable rangelands by including provisions in 7,000 grazing authorization renewals required to assure that established land health standards are achieved.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Assess conformance with standards for rangeland health, land use plans, and NEPA documents using interdisciplinary teams.
- Assess groups of allotments where they are homogeneous in nature.
- Consult early and frequently with FWS and NMFS to plan and coordinate ESA Section 7 compliance.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- This goal assumes level to slightly increased funding.
- NEPA documents will be developed in a timely manner.
- Litigation will not affect the overall work force schedule.
- Court decisions will not affect policy and regulations.
- New legislation will not overly impact present capabilities.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- BLM's grazing permit issuance and targeted outcome has a direct bearing on the ability of the USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to plan and coordinate Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation.
- Coordination with the DOI's Field Solicitor is extremely important; timely consultation is required.

Program evaluations:

- Five OIG audits and GAO investigations that affect annual and long-term rangeland tasks; however, none will significantly affect the workload.
- The "Interior's Monitoring Has Fallen Short of Agency Requirements" material weakness is being corrected by the "standards and guidelines for livestock grazing" initiative.

Long-Term Goal 2.3: By 2005, under the standards and guides for land health as outlined in the Pacific Northwest Forest Plan, offer for sale on a decadal average of 211 million board feet of timber in Western Oregon (Oregon and California Grant Lands) and 32 million board feet of timber outside the Pacific Northwest (Public Domain).

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Continue to use the Forest Ecosystem Health and Recovery Fund to support forest restoration and land health goals on public domain lands.
- Design and administer a sustainable level of timber sales by offering the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) of timber or a level of timber commensurate with established land health standards.
- Continue implementing the Forest Plan, focusing in part on the following broad goals established in the six resource management plans that govern the land base covered by the Plan:
 - develop and implement an aquatic conservation strategy to restore and maintain the ecological health of watersheds and ecosystems within them;

- provide a sustainable supply of timber and timber products to help maintain the stability of local and regional economies;
- develop a well-distributed system of reserves to protect existing large blocks of later-successional and old growth forests;
- provide for adaptive, flexible management that can be applied, on a site-specific basis, to all land allocations.
- Update watershed analyses in efforts to restore fish habitat and populations, improve water quality, and remain compliant with section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act.
- Design and conduct statistically reliable extensive surveys on 2.2 million acres of BLM lands in western Oregon. Survey approximately 200 sample plots representing 440,000 acres to develop a sound scientific information base that will help ensure protection for managed species.
- Support the Governor of Oregon's Coastal Salmon Initiative through the Jobs in the Woods Program. Projects should provide job opportunities to local communities and focus on salmon-related restoration projects in efforts to increase population levels, restore habitat, and ultimately preclude future species' listings on the ESA.
- At a landscape scale, apply watershed analysis, timber harvest planning, restoration projects, adaptive management practices, survey and management for the Northwest Forest Plan, and other monitoring.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- In-depth assessment of risks and comprehensive monitoring for threatened and endangered (T&E) species, special status species, and survey-and-manage species is necessary to mitigate impacts and withstand legal challenges within the area covered by the Northwest Forest Plan
- Timely resolution of legal challenges is necessary to provide stability in predicted commodity outputs.
- Increases in the complexity of, and legal challenges to, preparing timber for sale will cause decreased offerings of timber sales. Appropriate budget increases will be needed to maintain offerings at predicted levels.
- Increased urbanization in western Oregon will continue to increase complexities of balancing commodity production with other social and biological demands and processes.
- Declines in timber prepared for sale have resulted from increased complexities, such as Section 7 Consultation for endangered species, and watershed and riparian issues associated with offering timber for sale.

Crosscutting relationships to other agencies, customers, and stakeholders:

- The BLM is working closely with the Forest Service to implement the Forest Plan, including completing required survey protocols and regional/extensive surveys.
- New listings of T&E species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service will increase the workload in Section 7 Consultations under the Endangered Species Act.
- The Federal timber supply in the O&C counties has decreased by over 80%. Some localities within these counties are timber dependent. A stable Federal timber supply is an important contributor to the economic and social stability in these communities.

Long-Term Goal 2.4: By 2005, meet 51% of the demand for rights-of-way (ROWs) on the public lands and meet 80% of leases, permits, licenses, and easements within accepted timeframes while assuring established land health standards are achieved.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

To meet or exceed the goal of processing new minor category ROW applications within 60 days of receipt of a perfected application, the following strategy -- including training, use of electronic commerce, operator self-monitoring, and cost recovery -- will be pursued:

- Train staff in ROW processing and retain an experienced working cadre to process applications.
- Meet customer service standards, including the use of electronic commerce, for ROW actions.
- Maintain and enhance a web-based ROW application form and other pertinent information of value to customers.
- Shift more required tasks to applicants, provide other related support to the program (e.g., self-monitoring) etc., to provide some relief to BLM's work force.
- Issue Revised Cost Recovery regulations for ROW processing and monitoring costs, which may provide additional funding for ROW processing and would hopefully return funds collected for processing ROWs to the offices that performed the work.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes level funding. The ROW backlog could be further reduced if there was an increase in funding in the first four years.
- If we are not able to achieve additional reductions in the ROW backlog, it will expand from the current backlog up to about 4,000 cases by 2005. This will result in more customer dissatisfaction, which could perpetuate the backlog even further.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM and Forest Service are cooperative partners managing ROWs since both agencies are subject to the same statutes.
- The BLM is responsible for authorizing rights-of-way under the MLA when a ROW crosses over two or more Federal agencies' land.

Long-Term Goal 2.5: By FY 2005, 60 percent of customers and stakeholders understand and are satisfied with commercial use authorization procedures on the public lands.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Continue the commitment to use of customer surveys to assess changes in satisfaction levels, assess needs, and set priorities for improvements.
- Improve customer application processes and processing system design.
- Elevate the priority of existing lease support/compliance activities.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes level funding and the ability to leverage existing dollars to provide the desired level of new services or products. A high level of satisfaction could be obtained during the period covered by this plan if there was an increase in funding based on the budget plan established at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- BLM has implemented Service First strategies to co-locate multiple land management agencies, making it easier for customers to do "one-stop shopping."

Preserve Natural and Cultural Heritage Resources

The public lands contain exceptional geologic formations; rare and vulnerable plant and animal communities; wild free roaming horse and burro herds; wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers; and innumerable paleontological, archaeological, and historical sites. These resources are scientifically, ecologically, educationally, and recreationally important, representing a significant part of our Nation's natural and cultural heritage.

Congress has passed a variety of laws concerning the management and use of these heritage resources, including the Antiquities Act (1906), the Wilderness Act (1964), the National Historic Preservation Act (1966), the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968), the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act (1971), the Endangered Species Act (1973), the Sikes Act (1974), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (1976), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (1979), and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990). The BLM is generally required to inventory, evaluate, and, where appropriate, protect these legacies for the use and enjoyment of the American people. Some laws provide for specific protection of heritage resources, and BLM enforces these on the public lands.

Strategic Issues Related to Natural and Cultural Heritage Resources

Many of the laws concerning heritage resources establish procedures for formally recognizing areas that are unique or that contain significant scientific, educational, and recreational values. Some of these designations, including wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers, require Congressional action. Others, such as "areas of critical environmental concern," are administrative.

Because these designations are often controversial, the BLM's challenge is to work with all interested parties to expeditiously identify such areas, resolve any resource use conflicts, and manage any resulting designations. The BLM will do this following established planning and impact assessment procedures. The BLM will also encourage the study and evaluation of candidate areas on a comprehensive statewide basis using the full range of available management tools, in cooperation with other Federal and non-Federal parties.

Although the BLM land base has been established for some time, the precise pattern of land ownership is not rigidly fixed by law. In fact, the BLM is engaged in a continuous process of identifying opportunities for exchange and reconfiguring Federal land holdings. With the tight budgets of recent years, land exchanges are becoming an increasingly viable option for obtaining lands with key conservation values while transferring properties with development and commercial potential to state and private interests. Over time, this process will have the dual effect of rationalizing land ownership patterns, while upgrading the conservation value of Federal lands and enabling appropriate economic development in communities across the West.

The BLM understands that simply recognizing that an area contains unique and important features does not, by itself, translate into protection of the resource. Research may be necessary to determine the effects of fire, weeds, or other events. Wild horse and burro populations must be managed to ensure both the health of the land and the viability of free-roaming herds. Recovery plans must be implemented for threatened and endangered species. The protection of scenic values must be considered when uses are authorized. Wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers must be managed. The BLM's challenge is to improve its understanding and on-the-ground management of recognized heritage resources.

Increasingly, the growing populations of the West look to the public lands as a guarantee of their quality of life, characterized by open space, clean air, and clean water. Additionally, the public has developed a growing appreciation of the cultural and historical resources provided by the public lands, many of which are located close to the urban centers of the West. However, the BLM's ability to manage these resources effectively has been limited by stagnant budgets and a declining number of employees. If these trends continue, BLM stakeholders will have to adjust their expectations as to how well the BLM can carry out its legal responsibilities to protect natural and cultural resources on the public lands.

Long-Term Goal 3.1: By 2005, improve the condition of approximately 400 congressionally or administratively designated special management areas currently at risk.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

Estimated areas at risk include six Oregon rivers in litigation, one National Conservation Area in litigation, approximately 300 Wilderness Study Areas due to off-highway vehicle impacts (an estimated 75 percent show evidence of OHV trespass), and 50 areas of critical environmental concern. The BLM is also facing imminent litigation in two additional states due to the conflicts concerning impacts of vehicle use on these areas. The Bureau has inadequate resources to establish necessary signs and carry out other management actions that might be effective in ameliorating problems. Strategies to improve the condition of special management areas include the following:

- Develop specific management plans for at-risk areas.
- Build further coalitions and partnerships with agencies and organizations.
- Improve portal, directional, and informational signage.
- Close access to areas as needed to protect values.
- Disseminate information to broaden understanding and build support.
- Use law enforcement measures when required.
- Develop sprawl agreements with local governments to protect designated areas.
- Use available tools to acquire inholdings.
- Withdraw areas from use and entry where appropriate.
- Use the hydro-facility re-licensing process to seek improved protective measures where at-risk areas are involved.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- Unforeseen litigation
- The ability of partners to leverage monies.
- Alleviation of predictable litigation by acquiring the funds needed to correct existing problems (e.g., OHV use in wilderness and livestock grazing in wild and scenic river corridors).

Crosscutting relationships to others:

- BLM is a key member of the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council. Other members include the USFS, USFWS, NPS, the Corps of Engineers (COE), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), FHWA, FSA, National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), RHS, RUS, and USCG.
- BLM is also member of interagency organizations focusing on wilderness, trails, paleontology, and cultural/archaeology issues.
- FERC.
- CWAP - Unified Federal Policy for Watersheds.
- FAA for overflight of designated areas.

Program Evaluations:

Need to add recent wilderness evaluations.

Long-Term Goal 3.2: By FY 2005, manage wild horse and burro populations in a manner consistent with land health standards and healthy herds to achieve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance for 15 percent of the Herd Management Areas.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Establish appropriate management levels (AMLs) for all Herd Management Areas (HMAs).
- Systematically remove excess animals for adoption or sanctuary.
- Expand opportunities for adoption through multiple marketing strategies, including use of the Internet.
- Ensure that adopted horses are treated humanely.
- Issue title to adopters within 6 months of eligibility.
- Through research, assure the development of fertility control vaccines as a long-term method of population control.
- Develop a web-based Herd Management Area data base and redesign the Wild Horse and Burro Information data base with Internet access.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes level funding. The BLM could achieve the AML during the period covered by this plan if there was an increase in funding in the first four years. In the out-years, funding levels could then drop below the present appropriation level upon reaching the AML on all HMAs.
- If we are not able to achieve the AML, then rangeland conditions, including watershed and riparian areas and water quality, will degrade. There will be increased conflict among wildlife, domesticated livestock, and wild horse and burro herds.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM and Forest Service are cooperative partners in managing wild horses and burros since they are both subject to the Act.

- The Air Force administers withdrawn lands inhabited by herds and cooperates at the local field level.
- The Department of Energy (DOE) has jurisdiction over Naval Oil Shale Reserve 2 in Utah, which is an integral portion of a herd area.
- Several Native American Tribes cooperatively manage the movement of indigenous animals at the field office level.
- The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Biologic Resource Division cooperatively administers BLM's fertility control and animal population research.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies -- the Food Safety Inspection Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service -- are also cooperating agencies under Memorandums of Understanding for managing wild horses and burros.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service are active participants in managing wild horses and burros on shared lands and lands.

Program evaluations:

- Pierson internal evaluation, January 13, 1997
- OIG report #97-I-1104 August 12, 1997, on Management of Herd Levels, Wild Horse and Burro Program

Implementation of recommendations from *both* of these evaluations resulted in goal development for reaching AMLs as a priority for program. This forced us to analyze the entire management process of wild horses and burros on a national scale, from the initial establishment of the AML on HMAs to the removal of excess animals, holding and preparation, adoption, compliance, and issuance of title.

Long-Term Goal 3.3: By 2005, restore and protect 100 "at risk" cultural and paleontological treasures on the public lands.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Expand partnerships to support restoration and protection of at-risk cultural and paleontological properties.
- Seek additional sources of outside funding through such sources as the Colorado and Arizona State Historic Preservation funds and the Save America's Treasures Millennium Grants program under the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Fund.
- Advertise successful protection and restoration projects to encourage additional funding and other assistance.
- Begin to develop "second-generation" context documents to enhance BLM's ability to determine which cultural resources are most important.
- Use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for identification and ranking of paleontologically significant areas.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes continued and level funding for the Save America's Treasures Millennium Grants program. (In FY 1999, Congress added \$30 million to the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Fund for agencies receiving their funding through the Interior and Related Appropriations Act to compete for to protect cultural treasures.)

- If we are not able to protect the most critically endangered and "at risk" cultural and paleontological properties, the public's opportunities to enjoy the recreational, educational, and scientific benefits of these resources will be vastly reduced. Looting and vandalism will continue and perhaps increase if certain sectors of the public realize that the Bureau neglects these resources.

Crosscutting relationships to other Bureaus and agencies:

- Annually, BLM field offices have almost 100 challenge cost share and cooperative management agreements in place with universities; "friends of" organizations; nonprofit groups; Federal, State, and local entities; special interest groups; volunteers, etc. In FY1998, BLM field offices dedicated more than \$700,000 to such arrangements, and received more than \$2 million in matching funds, personnel time, and in-kind contributions. These arrangements expand BLM's on-the-ground capabilities and result in many protection, restoration, and scientific studies of at-risk cultural and paleontological sites and localities.
- BLM is working with the western State Historic Preservation Offices and other Federal and State agencies to automate cultural resource site records and digitize site locations in an effort to better manage BLM's cultural resources.

Program evaluations:

- OIG report #99-I-808, September 1999

The Office of Inspector General's FY1999 audit report of BLM's cultural resource management program cited several critical weaknesses. The OIG recommended "... that the Bureau develop and implement a Bureauwide long-range surveying plan for cultural sites which prioritizes those areas that have the most cultural significance. Once the plan is established, the Bureau should seek funding needed to systematically complete the surveys of the prioritized public land areas." This recommendation helped formulate the long-term goal. New money that may come to the cultural resources management program in FY 2001 and beyond will be used in part to begin to address this recommendation.

Long-Term Goal 3.4: By 2005, ensure that at least 15% of BLM cultural and paleontological collections are available and accessible to the public through development of partnerships with non-Federal curatorial facilities.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Provide BLM *Museum Partnership Program* grants that support the research, educational, and interpretive use of museum collections originating from public lands.
- Locate non-Federal curatorial facilities holding museum collections originating from BLM-administered lands, and make these collections more accessible to the public.
- Support projects which create brochures, catalogs, finding guides, publications, educational programs, and websites highlighting collections and data derived from collections in non-Federal facilities.
- Develop low or no-cost partnerships with non-Federal repositories to feature BLM collections in public exhibits and execute agreements with those willing to participate in a repository agreement process.
- Develop a model for the BLM State Office's to follow in identifying priority areas to inventory.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes current levels of funding and personnel. With increased funding, additional partnerships with non-Federal curatorial facilities could be developed and opportunities for research and educational use expanded.
- If the BLM is unable to continue funding projects under the *Museum Partnership Program*, then research and educational use of BLM collections in non-Federal curatorial facilities will suffer and the public benefits of these collections will not be maximized.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- To date, the following seven museum grants have been funded under the *Museum Partnership Program*: San Diego Museum of Man, Western Wyoming College, the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, the Arizona State Museum, the Society for Vertebrate Paleontology, the American Museum of Natural History, and the University of Wyoming Geological Museum.
- In addition, museum funding in FY1999 was provided for curation, exhibit production, symposia, catalogs, and upgrading collections to the following museums: University of Alaska, Maturango Museum, Museum of Western Colorado, Museum of the Rockies, Nevada State Museum, Elko County Museum, Museum of New Mexico, BYU Museum of Peoples and Culture, College of Eastern Utah, Field House Museum (Vernal), Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum, Southern State University, Utah Museum of Natural History, Washington State University, and South Dakota School of Mines Geology Museum.

Program evaluations:

The Office of Inspector General's FY1999 audit report of BLM's cultural resource management program cited several inadequacies. Relative to museum collections, the OIG recommended that: (1) "...both Federal (Bureau) and non-Federal repositories should be requested to identify, in accordance with repositories' capabilities, the Federal (Bureau) collections. Thereafter, the reported inventory information should be validated periodically"; and (2) "BLM contact all Bureau Museum Partnership Program repositories to determine the feasibility of initiating repository agreements regarding the management of Federal (Bureau) collections. Also, written repository agreements should be developed and executed with non-Federal repositories willing to participate in a repository agreement process." (OIG report #99-I-808, September 1999)

These OIG recommendations helped the BLM formulate the goal. Any additional funding would accelerate addressing these inadequacies.

Long-Term Goal 3.5: By FY 2005, 80 percent of recreation users are satisfied with the BLM's protection of significant historical, cultural, and other heritage resources.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Review annual survey results for changes in satisfaction levels and priorities for improvements and analyze open-ended comments from surveys for additional insights to additional customer needs.
- Improve protection features, products, or services

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes level funding and the ability to leverage existing dollars to provide the desired level of new services or products.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM partners with numerous Federal agencies and local nonprofits at various levels and in different locations. No known national effort is being pursued to work together on this area.

Reduce Threats to Public Health, Safety, and Property

The BLM is responsible for protecting public lands and facilities from unauthorized uses, hazardous materials, illegal dumping, theft, wildfire, and other unsafe conditions. Population growth in rural areas of the West increases risks and responsibilities in fire suppression, search and rescue, and response to natural emergencies. The BLM must provide immediate protection for employee and public safety, remediate environmental damage, and determine responsible parties. The public lands contain over \$5 billion of capital improvements such as roads, trails, dams, bridges, buildings, and recreation sites. Use of these facilities is increasing. Inspections are conducted for compliance with Federal, State, and local safety, health, and environmental regulations by BLM professionals. These inspections systems help develop cost data, identify maintenance needs, and ensure compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations.

The BLM is also responsible for enforcing Federal laws and regulations related to the public lands and resources. BLM investigates illegal uses of public lands, and uses appropriate administrative, civil, or criminal enforcement remedies to hold violators responsible, recover full compensation, and ensure compliance with laws and regulations. The BLM concentrates its enforcement efforts on resource protection activities and refers non-resource-related violations to local law enforcement agencies whenever possible.

Strategic Issues Related to Health, Safety, and Property

The BLM cannot control all threats, particularly those related to unauthorized use of the public lands. It can, however, manage the agency's preventative efforts and ability to respond to emergencies. The BLM must evaluate safety concerns, identify hazards and risks, assess incidents and response experience, educate the public, train employees, and implement policies and procedures to protect the public lands as well as employees and visitors. The BLM also must work to reduce hazards and risks through field inspections; periodic maintenance; and repair of its buildings, recreation sites, roads, bridges, trails, and dams. All field offices and related facilities (e.g., recreation sites, fire stations, and wild horse and burro facilities) are regularly inspected for compliance with safety, health, environmental, transportation, and fire prevention regulations under the BLM's Compliance Assessment -Safety, Health, and Environment (CASHE) Program.

As the population of the West expands into rural areas that surround cities and towns, new risks are created from natural phenomena such as fire, landslides, and other hazards. The resulting demand for protection of life and property in this wildland/urban interface often puts personnel at risk and stretches BLM's resources. To increase the safety of the public lands, the BLM must allocate funding to remediate hazards and prevent additional incidents. New or additional funding sources or other avenues will be pursued, including partnerships with other agencies and parties. For example, the BLM is spearheading an interagency partnership effort to clean up abandoned mine lands in Colorado and Montana when operators cannot be located. The BLM seeks both to reduce risk and to actively pursue cost avoidance/cost recovery through these and other efforts.

However, due to insufficient resources, the BLM faces a formidable challenge in trying to ensure safe recreational visits to the public lands. Recreation facilities are in urgent need of repair, roads and trails are in disrepair, and vandalism is a growing problem.

Additionally, the BLM lacks the resources to identify and mitigate abandoned mine lands, which can be fatal to the recreating public. The BLM lacks sufficient personnel to rescue lost visitors, and many sanitation and water systems need replacing. Moreover, the growing urban and rural communities of the West mean that the public lands are no longer remote; they often abut population centers. This has resulted in an increase of illegal activity on the public lands, including the dumping of hazardous material and a rise in the number of drug labs.

The BLM recognizes the importance of management partnerships in protecting resources, employees, and public land visitors. Over the next several years, efforts will focus on improving user safety and enhancing enjoyment of the public lands through cooperation, communication, and visitor contact.

Long-Term Goal 4.1: By 2005, the number of facilities maintained in fair or good structural condition will increase by 5 percent and the number of facilities in good safety, health, and environmental condition will increase by 10 percent.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Expedite acquisition of up-to-date and reliable condition assessments on existing facilities.
- Evaluate condition information and systematically rank maintenance priorities.
- Solicit maintenance project bids and issue contracts to implement the plan, or perform work by Force Account. Assure contract performance quality.
- Inspect and monitor all facilities maintenance actions for compliance and effectiveness.
- Perform follow-up CASHE inspections on at least a 5-year cycle.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes adequate funding to meet all facilities maintenance and safety inspection needs. The maintenance condition of existing facilities will not improve without adequate funding.
- If our strategies are not implemented, the deferred maintenance backlog will grow and facilities continue to decay.
- The field must have adequate hazardous material management and safety staff to perform follow-up CASHE inspections.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- BLM works with its sister bureaus through the DOI Planning, Design, Construction, and Maintenance Council to obtain guidance on current policies and share information with other bureaus on technical matters to support meeting this long-term goal.
- BLM works with the Bureau of Reclamation regarding assessments and technical support for BLM's Dam Safety Program.
- The BLM and EPA are jointly sponsoring training on the proper design, operation, and maintenance of transient noncommunity drinking water systems.
- BLM will be participating in an EPA-conducted Environmental Management Review of a BLM State and Field Office.
- Forest Service facilities collocated with the Bureau are inspected during CASHE visits.

Program evaluations:

- OIG Audit Report No. 99-I-874 (September 1999) on deferred maintenance issues and cost estimates for six bureaus including BLM.

This audit and earlier (February 4, 1998) testimony of Assistant Secretary John Barry to Congress and his associated commitments to Congress stimulated development of this goal. They drive BLM's efforts to resolve its transportation system problems

- GAO report, "Environmental Auditing: A Useful Tool That Can Improve Environmental Performance and Reduce Costs," GAO/RCED-95-37, April 1995

This report made specific recommendations and highlighted the benefits to BLM from continuing use of the CASHE Program.

Long-Term Goal 4.2: By 2005, assess the condition of 100 percent of BLM-maintained roads to identify public and administrative access needs, maintenance requirements to resolve public safety and environmental concerns, and prospective road closures.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Gather reliable sampling data on the condition of BLM roads.
- Develop a formal BLM transportation vision statement and policy, and issue implementing guidance with criteria for management decisions on road maintenance levels and priorities.
- Integrate transportation planning with BLM land use planning.
- Assure credible FIMMS/COTS data and cost estimating procedures that meet FFAS requirements.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes level funding. Without sufficient funding, the BLM will be unable to perform condition assessments on roads.
- If BLM road conditions cannot be determined due to lack of funding, then the levels of deferred maintenance will increase. This will have a adverse affect on the public and employees because safety will be compromised.
- Without adequate and safe roads, BLM's land and resource management efforts will be adversely impacted.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- BLM works with its sister bureaus through the DOI Planning, Design, Construction and Maintenance Council to obtain guidance on current policies and share information with other bureaus on technical matters to support meeting this long-term goal.
- BLM also works with the USFS and EPA through a Clean Water Action Plan interagency working group on roads.
- The Federal Highway Administration provides financial and technical assistance under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century as it concerns public road issues and BLM roads.

Program evaluations:

- OIG Audit Report No. 99-I-874 (September 1999) on deferred maintenance issues and cost estimates for six bureaus, including the BLM.

This audit and earlier (February 4, 1998) testimony of Assistant Secretary John Barry to Congress and his associated commitments to Congress stimulated development of this goal. They drive BLM efforts to resolve our transportation system problems.

Long-Term Goal 4.3: By 2005, identify and correct physical safety hazards at 250 abandoned mines and also remediate 250 hazardous material sites on the public lands.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Inventory physical hazard Abandoned Mine Land (AML) sites and other hazardous materials sites.
- Identify Potentially Responsible Parties for cost avoidance or cost recovery.
- Rank physical hazards for corrective actions in coordination with concerned stakeholders.
- Assess risk at hazardous materials sites and evaluate high-risk sites for cleanup.
- Through post-project monitoring and study, assure actions are effective and that the lessons learned benefit subsequent risk and/pollution reducing efforts

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes initial baseline funding for FY 2001 and a sustained base level of funding through FY 2005.
- Without the requested funding, visitor and public land user injuries and fatalities from AML and other physical hazards will likely increase due to the increased number of visitations, and the increased proximity of residences and visitors to AML and hazardous sites. Contamination at hazardous materials sites will continue to expose public land users to toxic substances that affect human health and will damage the environment and natural resources.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM and various County, State and Federal agencies are cooperative partners in efforts to reduce risk to the public associated with the physical hazards at abandoned mines and hazardous materials sites.
- The EPA and States administer clean-up programs under which BLM is required to clean up hazardous materials sites.
- The Forest Service has similar goals to correct physical hazards at abandoned mine sites.

Program evaluations:

- GAO Report #RCED-99-111, April 1999, Superfund Progress Made by EPA and Other Federal Agencies to Resolve Program Management Issues.

This GAO review motivated the BLM to increase the priority of identifying and rededicating hazardous materials and AML sites. The BLM improved its hazardous materials and AML sites inventories, identified clean-up goals, and examined its cost avoidance and cost recovery practices under CERCLA provisions. Additionally, recent tort claims that hold the BLM responsible for personal injuries at abandoned mines (due to unposted hazards) are moving the BLM to address unsafe situations at AMLs.

Long-Term Goal 4.4: By FY 2005, investigate and take enforcement action on a minimum of 52 percent of identified sites and reported violations of Federal laws and regulations resulting from the urban interface with public lands and resources.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Emphasize maximum use of the automated LAWNET system by BLM law enforcement officers for reporting violations and enforcement actions to develop and modify field office Law Enforcement Plans that prioritize changing law enforcement needs.
- Focus a larger percentage of law enforcement resources on violations and enforcement actions needed to address encroaching social and criminal activities resulting from the urban interface with the public lands.
- Reduce funding for reimbursable law enforcement agreements having a low rate of enforcement action and monthly report submission to Field Offices.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes level funding. Under a level budget, the BLM would experience a continued decline in its capabilities to provide visitor protection and law enforcement services because of expanding public land uses and demands for services coupled with static budgets and personnel ceilings in law enforcement and all program areas. This would lead to fewer enforcement actions being taken and even fewer actual violations being detected and reported.
- If we are not able to achieve the enforcement action rate of 52 percent, a minimum appropriate deterrent effect will not be provided, which would contribute to and encourage additional criminal activities on public land.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM and the Forest Service are cooperative partners in managing contiguous public lands and National Forest areas and have cross-delegated law enforcement authority to their law enforcement officers for patrol and enforcement responsibilities that benefit both agencies.
- The BLM and the Forest Service are in the process of entering a partnership for expanding BLM's LAWNET reporting system to accommodate the crime reporting needs of both agencies.
- The BLM and other Interior bureaus have a Memorandum of Understanding for cross-delegation of law enforcement officers for enforcement activities that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Long-Term Goal 4.5: By 2005, improve public and employee fire safety for the Department of the Interior by implementing 100% of plans, reducing the 10-year average percent of human-caused fire to 16% and upgrading 90 fire facilities to approved standards.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Develop fire management objectives based upon land management goals and objectives (Phase One of fire planning process).
- Evaluate historical wildland and prescribed fire workloads.
- Determine organizational and budget requirements to meet goals and objectives at the most effective and efficient level (MEL).

- Develop fire management plans (FMPs) for all lands managed by the Bureau with burnable vegetation that address goals and objectives, workloads, and the MEL.
- Evaluate historical human-caused fire occurrence in relation to preventability factors.
- Perform Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) analysis to determine the most effective prevention strategies for the greatest return on investments in the prevention program.
- Based upon the FMP, determine structure requirements at identified fire stations (helibase, engine bays, housing, dispatch, etc).

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes growth towards 100 percent of MEL. The current funding level is approximately 81 percent.
- Initial attack and general readiness forces consume most of the Preparedness funding up through 84-85 percent of MEL. A trend in reduction of human-caused fires will not likely be seen until a sustained funding of greater than 85 percent MEL is received.
- At a level budget, there will be a decrease in effectiveness in the preparedness program, a reduction in prescribed fire accomplishments, and a potential increase in human-caused fire activity. This will result in an increase in the total cost of the fire program due to increased suppression efforts, emergency rehabilitation needs, and the loss of commercially valuable and other resources.
- Funding of the Department's Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvement 5-Year Initiative for fire management is essential to meeting the performance measure regarding facilities.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The wildland fire problem knows no agency or administrative boundaries and is larger than any single agency budget capability (Federal, State, or local). As a result, extensive cooperation among agencies has developed over time. One example is the creation of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), which includes representatives from all Federal wildland fire agencies, the military, and State agencies.
- The wildland fire community has sponsored the development of position, qualification, and training standards; safety requirements; equipment standards; mutual aid agreements; fire planning processes; prevention analysis; and mitigation techniques.
- Cooperative agreements, developed in conjunction with rural fire departments, State fire organizations, and Federal cooperators, are an integral component in the development of FMPs, initial attack response areas, strategies and tactics, and efficient and safe overall suppression operations.
- With the advances in interagency cooperation, fire facilities are being constructed to house Bureau and local agency resources; these are built only after effectiveness and efficiency opportunities have been reviewed.

Improve Land, Resource, and Title Information

The BLM has extensive historical and current information on land ownership, use, and condition in the United States. The agency maintains cadastral survey and historical data on patented lands, along with information on the mineral estate, resource conditions, and permits or leases on Federal lands. Historical records are critical to resolving many ownership disputes and are increasingly recognized as an important source of both genealogical information and data about historic resource conditions in the United States.

As the complexities of managing ecosystems increase, data collection and analysis becomes even more vital to managing the land. The BLM's information about land ownership, status, and condition is of interest to a wide variety of parties, including public land users; other Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies; and the scientific community.

Strategic Issues Related to Land, Resource, and Title Information

Federal agencies are required to integrate strategic planning for information resources management into program and activity planning. Information technology can increase the efficiency of business processes, but agencies cannot afford multiple systems doing similar functions, redundant data entry and retrieval, and excessive long-term costs for maintenance and training.

To simplify the exchange and retrieval of information among diverse organizations, data standards must be developed and agreed to among the participants. Quality control will be necessary to ensure that BLM's data and information are reliable and current. Advanced technologies must be available to assure wide dissemination of information on a variety of media. Systems enhancements will be necessary over time. While the Internet and internal Intranet will help provide better and faster access to information, they also raise potential Privacy Act concerns. BLM's response to these challenges will be critical to its continued collaborative efforts with others.

However, the BLM's ability to develop an adequate information base from which it can make sound land use decisions is hampered by limited or diminishing resources. For example, increased use of aerial photography could help the BLM identify locations where illegal fossil collecting is occurring. At present, the public is losing innumerable fossils to illegal collectors, and each fossil lost means that part of our paleontological heritage is gone forever.

Long-Term Goal 5.1: By FY 2005, post 5 million General Land Office conveyance records and survey plats for portions of 30 States on the Internet to assist title, survey, historical, and genealogical research.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Upgrade the information technology for scanning and indexing historic records .
- Utilize customer feedback via e-mail to refine the GLO web site and correct data errors.
- Assess and improve customer saturation.
- Maximize the effectiveness of GLO records automation through partnerships with Federal and State agencies.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- Performance with a level budget in 2001-2005 will gradually reduce the capability to maintain the automation process at a manageable production rate. The costs for systems maintenance and support will consume 15 percent of the budget, while labor costs will continue to rise 3 to 5 percent per year.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Indian Tribes are cooperative partners in the documentation of Indian-related title records through the GLO web site.
- The BLM is cooperating with international, Federal, State, and local governmental entities in exchanging records automation technology.
- Bureau personnel access the web site to validate land status data against an image of the actual title document.
- The GLO records being posted on the Internet are utilized by title companies in constructing title abstracts
- Surveyors access survey plats and field notes for use in retracing the original government surveys.
- Historians search the GLO records to document migration patterns associated with the westward migration.
- Customers from all walks of life access the web site to glean family history and genealogical information.

Long-Term Goal 5.2: By 2005, determine or validate boundaries for 16,000 miles of public land boundaries or patents and produce a common data solution across government agencies to support priority resource management and land transactions in 9,000 townships.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Implement scientific information technologies such as the National Integrated Land System (NILS) to improve production and maintenance.
- Integrate the production and maintenance of coordinates into surveyor's day-to-day work.
- Adopt, promote, and develop standard tools, processes, and data standards to allow us to pool cadastral survey resources across government agencies.
- Enhance communications regarding cadastral activities across government agencies and between cadastral and other disciplines.
- Expand partnerships with other Federal agencies as well as county and local government organizations.
- Utilize advanced technologies, i.e., GPS and related technology, for cadastral field surveys to improve productivity.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes level funding from the 1420 subactivity and central funding sources.
- The long-goal is also based upon additional funding for purchasing advanced field technologies such as Global Positioning Systems and advanced field data collection methodologies.
- The technical capabilities identified in the National Integrated Lands System (NILS) project are needed to meet the goal

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM, Forest Service, BIA, USFWS, USBR, Tribal governments, State agencies, and counties provide funding and partnership resources to obtain Federal and Tribal boundaries and collect integrated geographic coordinate data base (GCDB) data.
- The BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and a consortium of counties are cooperating to integrate cadastral data and derive common data solutions so they can collectively address ecosystem management, NEPA, and urbanization.
- The National Integrated Land System (NILS) provides a common set of tools and a government-wide data model to support landscape based initiatives
- The BLM, through the Interagency Cadastral Coordination Committee (ICCC), coordinates budget and workloads for cadastral surveys across Federal government and Tribal agencies.
- The BLM has data-sharing agreements with over 125 counties and more than 30 State and Federal organizations
- The GCDB is the most commonly used cadastral data base by counties and Federal agencies in the western United States

Provide Economic and Technical Assistance

The BLM provides various types of economic and technical assistance to many State, local, and Tribal governments and to Alaska Natives, as established by specific statutes. The BLM is responsible for:

- ▶ disbursing payments of shared revenues derived from activities on the public lands;
- ▶ disbursing payments-in-lieu of taxes (PILT);
- ▶ conveying land to Alaska Native peoples, Native corporations, and the State of Alaska under ANCSA, ANILCA, and the Alaska Statehood Act mandates;
- ▶ settling Alaska Native and American Indian allotment land claims;
- ▶ providing tribes with technical assistance to develop leased energy/minerals resources;
- ▶ providing fire suppression services on all Federal and Native lands in Alaska; and
- ▶ adjusting land tenure between Federal agencies and States.

Strategic Issues Related to Economic and Technical Assistance

The BLM must meet its statutory responsibilities to convey land to Alaska Native peoples and corporations, to the State of Alaska, and to other States and beneficiaries. BLM will also strive to provide land and other resources to support community economic and infrastructure development when consistent with the local land use plan and other statutory and regulatory requirements.

The BLM is charged with developing and maintaining government-to-government relationships with Native American Tribal Governments and with compacting and contracting certain functions with Native American and Alaska Native entities under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, as amended.

Long-Term Goal 6.1: By 2005, establish 20 formal agreements with federally recognized tribes for managing tribal minerals, completing cadastral survey work, and administering public lands (through Public Law 93-638 contracts, self-governance agreements, cooperative agreements, and technical assistance).

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Respond within regulatory time frames to all requests to establish self-determination agreements for tribal minerals management or cadastral survey.
- Seek opportunities to transfer public land work that would be done under contract to interested tribes to accomplish under self-governance agreements.
- Seek opportunities to establish FOGDMA agreements with tribes for tribal oil and gas work.
- Consult regularly with Tribes about opportunities for cooperative management of areas and/or programs of concern and interest to the Tribes.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The long-term goal assumes level funding. If there were an increase in funding, the number of opportunities to sign agreements with Tribes would greatly increase in number and quality.

- Tribes have some reluctance to sign documents with the Bureau unless there is a clear opportunity to meet tribal goals. Therefore, funding or opportunities for economic development, jobs, or other benefits will seriously affect tribal willingness to enter into agreements.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM seeks opportunities to consult with Tribes and develop agreements that include other agencies wherever possible; in the Pacific Northwest, this includes efforts with the Forest Service; in the Four Corners area, the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service often join BLM in consultation and cooperative agreement activities.
- All relevant bureaus of the DOI are involved in developing Self-Governance regulations with tribes; the bureaus are also working with the Office of Self-Governance to try to increase agreements with Tribes and all DOI bureaus.
- The Interagency Minerals Steering Committee, composed of the BLM, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and Minerals Management Service (MMS), meets regularly to determine how best to achieve goals for better cooperation and development of effective self-determination agreements for the management of tribal minerals.

Program evaluations:

- Evaluation of the structure and operations of the Native American Office (NAO), Santa Fe, NM: This evaluation concluded that the best use of resources would be the placement of the personnel in this office in field locations in the bureau, with the establishment of one Native American Coordinator position in the Washington Office. The NAO is moving to place its personnel in field locations, and the Native American Coordinator position in the Washington Office is currently being advertised.

Long-Term Goal 6.2: By 2005, complete 80 percent of actions on existing energy and mineral leases on Indian lands while protecting/enhancing environmental values and minimizing future liabilities.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Provide technical services to tribal and Indian allottees, prioritizing the workload so that the most critical areas of concern are addressed.
- Maintain quality control on contracts with Tribes through Public Law 93-638

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- The goal assumes level funding and no growth in demand for services from Tribes or individual Indian allottees.
- If we are not able to provide the technical assistance for mineral development needed by Tribes or individual Indian allottees, some mineral development activity on tribal or allotted lands will be forgone. This will cause economic hardship to Tribes and individual allottees, as well as potential litigation.

- Additional contracts, under PL 93-638, for priority technical services to Tribes and allottees will further reduce the remaining funding available to meet the needs of noncontracting Tribes and individual Indian mineral owners. At a projected accomplishment level of only 80 percent, any further reduction of services may represent an untenable risk to the Department.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The Bureau of Indian Affairs; the Bureau of Land Management; the Minerals Management Service; the Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement; the Office of the Special Trustee; and the Office of Trust Fund Management are cooperating agencies in the management of tribal and allotted Indian lands.

Program evaluations:

- The BLM is conducting an evaluation of the Inspection and Enforcement program and is preparing a comprehensive inventory and review of orphan and idle/inactive wells on tribal and allotted Indian lands.
- In either FY 2000 or FY 2001, the Office Inspector General is expected to review contracted functions.

Long-Term Goal 6.3: By 2005, complete 80 percent of land disposal and land conveyance actions in support of local community and State economic needs.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- TBD- Goal includes Recreation-Public Purposes Act leases and patents, Alaska State Conveyances, and Land Disposals

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- TBD

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- TBD

Program evaluations:

- TBD

Restore and Maintain the Health of the Land

Restoring and maintaining the health of the land is the foundation for everything the BLM does. Livestock grazing, timber harvesting, hunting, fishing, and other resource uses can be sustained over time only if the land is healthy.

Many of the lands managed by the BLM were degraded by the end of the 19th century because of unsustainable livestock grazing, timber harvesting, and mining practices. While important strides have been made in this century in developing and applying more sustainable management practices, resource conditions are still unsatisfactory in some areas. For example, the following trends were identified by the U.S. Forest Service in its 1993 Renewable Resource Assessment update:

- ▶ Many of the Nation's rangelands are in unsatisfactory condition. Efforts to improve these lands may be hampered by increased competition between livestock and wildlife, as well as limitations that have been placed on certain management practices, such as the use of herbicides.
- ▶ Forest health is increasingly a concern. From 1986 to 1991, timber mortality increased by 24.3 percent. Many forests are aging or stagnating, thereby becoming more susceptible to insects and diseases.
- ▶ Reclaiming abandoned mines is a challenge, since there is a backlog of unreclaimed, abandoned, and inactive mines, including many on public lands. Discharges from these mines can cause damage in local areas, especially if there is acid drainage.
- ▶ Over half of America's wetlands have been converted to other uses, primarily agriculture.
- ▶ Continued loss of biological diversity is an issue. As land use intensifies, natural diversity is reduced and ecosystems are simplified. Biological communities may lose their ability to adapt to change.

The public lands are just one component of a larger, intertwined, and interdependent landscape that has a variety of owners and managers. Working with others, the BLM is helping to develop and implement an overall strategy for maintaining and restoring the health of the land. This strategy has three interrelated components:

- ▶ *Standards for the health of the land.* In 1995, the Secretary of the Interior established 24 Resource Advisory Councils to advise the BLM. These Councils represent a balance of views among various interests concerned with managing and using the public lands. The Councils have helped the BLM shape and define a shared vision for standards of land health. In a separate effort, standards for the management of late successional and old growth forests in the Pacific Northwest were developed as part of the Northwest Forest Plan approved in 1994.
- ▶ *Assessments of ecological condition, trend, and function.* The BLM and others are working to develop cost-effective methods to measure and track the health of the land. The BLM is also participating in a number of interagency and intergovernmental assessments of ecological condition, trend, and function.

Examples include the Eastside and Upper Columbia River Basin assessments, primarily in Oregon and Idaho, and the Henry's Fork assessment in Idaho and Wyoming. Such assessments are crucial to improving BLM's understanding of natural and human sources of ecosystem stress. They also help identify areas that may warrant restoration and maintenance activities.

- ▶ *Restoration and maintenance activities.* Because funding and staffing are not currently available to restore and maintain the health of *all* of the public lands, BLM's highest priority will be to restore lands with the greatest likelihood for recovery and increased benefits, especially those lands that are at risk.

In implementing this strategy, BLM's efforts are being guided by several principles:

- ▶ *Fire and Fuels Management.* The BLM supports using fire and fuels management as tools to enhance resource conditions in fire-dependent ecosystems. Fire and fuels treatment can be used to manage some ecologically unhealthy situations, such as forest overcrowding, loss of plant diversity, nuisance vegetation, and dangerous fuel levels. Properly used, planned fires can help regenerate desirable vegetation and meet other management objectives in fire-dependent ecosystems.
- ▶ *Landscape approach.* A landscape approach looks at an area that is large and encompassing enough to accommodate not only the particular resources of interest, but also any adjacent lands connected by functions and/or processes.
- ▶ *Adaptive management.* To be effective, resource management practices must consider local conditions. Practices that are sustainable in one area may not work in another. The BLM recognizes that ecosystems are dynamic and that management practices must adapt as conditions change. Through resource monitoring and other sources, BLM offices will acquire timely information on the effectiveness of ongoing management. This information will be used to adapt management practices when required.
- ▶ *Management partnerships.* Cooperative restoration strategies across landscapes will work only if public land users, adjacent landowners, involved governments, and others work together. The BLM, for example, is working closely with partners to reduce the rate of spread of invasive plants. In addition, the Western Governors Association and the Department of the Interior have proposed a *Western Abandoned Mine Partnership* to improve streams degraded by abandoned mining operations. The BLM is committed to expanding such partnerships.

Most of the lands managed by the BLM are characterized by thin soils and very low annual precipitation. They are subject to a wide variety of environmental stresses. In some areas, it will be impossible to restore the lands to their previous resiliency and diversity. In other areas, decades may be required to demonstrate any real progress.

While recognizing these difficulties, the BLM is committed to moving forward. The actions BLM plans to take to restore and maintain the health of the public lands are discussed in terms of two interrelated goals: (1) *Understand the condition of the land*, and (2) *Restore at-risk and maintain functioning systems*.

Understand the Condition of the Land

Information and education are essential to managing the public lands. To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands, land managers need sound information about resource conditions, ecological trends, and ecosystem function. They also need information about the sustainability of public land uses and the contribution these uses make to local and regional socio-economic conditions. It is crucial that this information be shared among BLM's varied partners.

The BLM is committed to using the best scientific and technical information available to make resource management decisions and to sharing that information with its partners.

Strategic Issues

The BLM faces a number of major challenges in this area. The agency is not a research organization and must rely primarily on others to conduct basic and applied research for its use. The BLM collaborates with others on a variety of functions and geographic areas. It is vital that BLM continue to work with others to identify where the greatest benefit can be realized when research results are applied to on-the-ground situations.

Information that is useful to managing the public lands is gathered by many parties, including the BLM; other Federal agencies; State, Tribal, and local governments; quasi-governmental entities such as watershed councils; land grant colleges and universities; local land users; and nongovernmental organizations such as the World Resources Institute. Research information is gathered at varying scales and for disparate purposes. To effectively share this wealth of information, interactive data bases are required.

The public will be able to effectively participate in managing the public lands only if it has sound information about resource management opportunities and constraints. The BLM is committed to working with others to ensure that the public has access to timely and pertinent information about environmental, social, and economic trends affecting the management of the public lands.

Long-Term Goal 1.1: By 2005, assess the condition of the Public Lands on 216 subbasins.

The BLM is working to develop cost-effective methods to assess the condition and use of the public lands. These assessments are expected to provide regional pictures of current and projected (a) resource conditions and use, (b) risks or threats to sustainable resource values, and (c) opportunities for enhancement of resource values through management intervention.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive resource assessment system across the public lands that:
 - Is focused at a mid-scale,
 - Uses the hydrologic subbasin as the basic geographic building-block,
 - Uses a minimum suite of indicators,
 - Is applied in cooperation with partners, and
 - Is updated periodically.

- Utilize the assessment strategy as a basis for setting priorities for planning and restoration actions. Factors to be considered will include the amount of public land contained within each subbasin, the relative importance of issues associated with those public lands, and opportunities for cooperative efforts among landowners.
- Initiate resource assessments on those areas where additional information is needed to determine if existing land use plan decisions are meeting resource needs. For example, it may be necessary to conduct assessments of habitat conditions in an area to determine if land use plan decisions meet the habitat needs of sensitive species such as sage grouse, or if BLM actions and decisions are affecting attainment of clean water standards.
- Develop schedules for further assessments (HUC levels 5/6) and needed resources in priority watersheds.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- A credible and affordable assessment strategy will be developed by the end of FY 2000;
- The BLM will receive at least level funding;
- Other agencies and organizations will continue to adopt common data standards and presentation formats to facilitate information sharing.
- Congress, the public, and the courts will accept the "minimum suite of indicators" as constituting a reasonable balance between scientific credibility and funding realities.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM will use data and information from other agencies whenever applicable (e.g., EPA's Index of Watershed Indicators).
- The BLM will seek common indicators that can be applied across jurisdictional boundaries.
- The BLM will seek to fill identified gaps in knowledge or methodology through the normal research process with USGS's Biological Resources Division.

Long-Term Goal 1.2: By 2005, Review 100 percent of BLM's existing land use plans and associated NEPA documents and initiate amendments or revisions as necessary to reflect new information and management strategies.

Over the past two decades, the magnitude of resource issues relating to the management of public lands has grown at a rate that far exceeds BLM's ability to resolve existing land use conflicts, much less complete systematic and comprehensive planning for the expected demands in the next several decades. Since the completion of the BLM's first land use plans (LUPs) and associated Environmental Impact Statements (EISs), several major issues have emerged, such as new standards in implementing the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act, listing of many species under the Endangered Species Act, rapid population growth in the West, and new laws that require other Federal and State agencies to participate in activities occurring on Federal lands. As a result, the BLM is increasingly finding its land use plans and National Environmental Policy (NEPA) documents are out of date, i.e., they do not reflect current natural resource or socio-economic conditions. Updating the Bureau's planning base must occur to address these issues, provide cumulative analysis, and meet new environmental standards.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Identify planning and NEPA deficiencies using the following criteria:
 - Changes in resource conditions such as new species listings, weed invasions, or declining water quality.
 - Anticipated changes in use such as coalbed methane development, land tenure adjustments, or prescribed burning.
 - Unmet program or administrative requirements such as OHV designations, Wild & Scenic River recommendations, T&E species consultations, or Clean Water Act Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements.
 - Issues or concerns raised by users, adjacent landowners, or other agencies.
- Initiate and complete amendments and revisions consistent with available funding.
- Seek to expand opportunities for collaborative planning with State, Tribal and local governmental authorities and with other Federal agencies.
- Revise BLM's land use planning manual/handbook to provide guidance for planning actions and develop/revise the training course to address planning and NEPA requirements.
- Fill key positions to provide the necessary planning/NEPA skills and knowledge at all organizational levels. Contract work where internal capabilities are inadequate.

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- BLM will be able to do very limited corrective planning work with existing funds.
- State and Field Offices must maintain a level of staffing and expertise sufficient to complete evaluations and revisions. Planning and NEPA expertise has been steadily diminishing across BLM; many offices have not refilled vacant planning/NEPA positions.
- The need for land use plan revisions and amendments is often generated by changing circumstances that are beyond BLM's control. These factors include such things as changes in resource conditions, changes in resource demand, and evolving legal requirements.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- BLM works with other Federal agencies and State, Tribal and local governments on collaborative planning efforts and environmental assessments.
- Other agencies such as the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Park Service, and others also have planning and NEPA implementation procedures.

Program evaluations:

- The BLM will be conducting program evaluations on the BLM State Offices' planning and NEPA reviews/corrective actions.

Restore At-Risk and Maintain Functioning Systems

One of the most important roles played by public lands is to provide habitat for Special Status species. Public lands managed by the BLM support 228 species of plants and animals federally listed as threatened or endangered (one-fifth of all federally listed species), 68 species that are proposed for listing, and 71 that are candidates for listing. As a result, the health of the public lands has a significant impact on the health and viability of Special Status species. Actions taken to restore public lands are vital to the recovery of listed species and to limiting the listing of additional species.

In addition to habitat for Special Status species, public lands are a critical component of the watersheds identified by the States that are the most *at-risk* watersheds. More than one-third of all Category One watersheds contain at least 15 percent public lands. Therefore, it is essential that BLM be an active partner in restoration activities to clean up and protect drinking water sources and sensitive natural resources such as wetlands.

Clean water and healthy watersheds form the basis of resilient ecosystems, benefitting not only public land values and uses but also adjacent communities, improving livability for local residents.

The BLM is unique among public land management agencies; the agency manages vast portions of the western United States and Alaska (264 million acres) across many land forms and vegetation types. For decades the BLM has been concerned with healthy, proper functioning watersheds and has integrated watershed management with other programs and uses on public lands, restoring the health of many watersheds suffering degradation. The agency is particularly well positioned to make significant national contributions to (1) clean water and healthy watersheds, (2) biological diversity, and (3) the protection of critical habitat for a variety of plant and animal species. The BLM manages far more land in "Category 1" watersheds (those defined by State and Tribes as priority areas) than any other Interior agency. Public lands (where ownership is ≥ 15 percent) play a critical role in more than one-third of all the "Category 1" watersheds in the west. The need to proactively address water quality and other resource issues has been rapidly increasing, but our budget has not kept pace, leaving the BLM woefully lacking the resources necessary to adequately address the growing needs in threatened watersheds.

It is imperative that BLM address watershed restoration needs now, while recovery is still possible and before at-risk and degraded watersheds deteriorate (i.e., conversion of perennial water to ephemeral flows, loss of soil productivity, lack of vegetation diversity, and establishment of invasive weed species) to a condition where they are unable to respond to management actions. The BLM now requires a substantial resource investment if it is to stop the landscape scale changes now underway in the western U.S. Otherwise, resource conditions will continue to deteriorate at faster and faster rates throughout the West and, combined with risks due to catastrophic wildfires and expansion of weed infestations, will result in permanent loss of habitat and a decline in dependent populations of plants and animals. The number of plants and animals added to the list of threatened and endangered species will continue to increase, and recovery options for these species will either be lost or much more difficult and expensive to achieve. The consequences of not devoting more resources to emerging issues will divert scarce, core BLM technical expertise from tangible resource management to responding to litigation, complying with settlement agreements, and conducting monitoring and assessment work mandated in biological opinions.

Long-Term Goal 2.1: By 2005, achieve a 20 percent reduction of the number of watersheds in priority sub-basins that do not meet State/Tribal water quality standards.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Work with States, Tribes, and local governments and interested stakeholders to identify specific watersheds that do not meet water quality standards and that involve BLM use authorizations which provide opportunities for watershed improvement and protection.
- Identify specific smaller watersheds (HUC 5/6) in which to focus water quality and watershed condition improvement efforts. Evaluation factors will include Federal lands status, the magnitude and adverse impacts of impairments, State and Tribal Unified Watershed Assessments, the vulnerability of the watershed to degradation, and the extent of public interest.
- Identify Best Management Practices (BMPs) and management strategies that meet Federal, State, and Tribal water quality requirements. Adjust BMPs when monitoring shows that water quality protection is inadequate.
- Restore habitats in subbasins that need restoration to conserve multiple species of plants and animals, with priority given to those supporting special status species.
- By 2005, remediate 375 Abandoned Mined Land (AML) sites and plug 93 identified unplugged/abandoned orphan wells that are degrading water quality

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- Cooperation with other Federal agencies will be required in developing common frameworks for assessing watersheds and for scheduling and implementing watershed restoration activities. Public comment on, and final adoption and approval during FY 2000 of, the Unified Federal Policy for watershed management and water quality protection is important to development and documentation of such frameworks
- Funding will affect BLM's ability to meet this goal.
- Water pollution problems stemming from AMLs typically take 4-5 years to address for each contributing site. Watershed or watershed segment cleanups take considerably longer and require continued funding throughout various phases of each project.
- Oil prices affect the number of wells that are temporarily abandoned or shut-in.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The BLM will establish State-Office-level Memorandums of Understanding or equivalent agreements with each State water quality agency and appropriate Tribes that outline respective responsibilities for managing and improving water quality. The BLM will provide technical assistance, tools, and expertise to support State and tribal development of Total Maximum Daily Load plans.
- The USGS's Water Resources Division has State-cooperative and Federal programs and projects in place that will provide some support for the science data needs for watershed restoration.

- The BLM and the Forest Service are often both land managers in priority watersheds needing watershed restoration. The Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service are also participants in managing lands in certain priority subbasins. Numerous Tribes manage lands in priority watersheds identified for watershed restoration needs in areas where the BLM has a responsibility to act.
- The BLM implements its water-quality-based AML program as an integral part of the Clean Water Act with other Federal and State agencies.
- The BLM will cooperate with State agencies and will try to develop partnerships to fund the plugging of orphan wells; one example is the closing/mitigation, in cooperation with the Bureau of Reclamation and State agencies, of orphan brine wells contributing salt loads to the Colorado River system.

Program evaluations:

A number of recent evaluations have focused on public land water quality issues:

- GAO evaluations relating to GAO Report #RCED-99-111, April 1999, Superfund Progress Made by EPA and Other Federal Agencies to Resolve Program Management Issues.
- GAO # RCED-99-45, February 1999, Water Quality. The Federal Role in Addressing—and Contributing to—Nonpoint Source Pollution.
- GAO # RCED-95-58, Water Quality -- Information on Salinity Control Projects in the Colorado River Basin
- The IOGCC recently completed a report on the dilemma created by the Nation's idle wells..
- The Bonding/Unfunded Liability Review (March 1995). Recommendations in this review led to proposed changes in the Oil and Gas regulations that could reduce the liability for and number of orphan wells.

Long-Term Goal 2.2: By 2005, achieve proper functioning condition or an upward trend on BLM-administered riparian/aquatic habitats in 80 percent of the watersheds within priority subbasins.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Assess conditions of all riparian-wetland resources.
- Focus management actions on those resources which are "at risk."
- Protect and restore resources by implementing sustainable management strategies to accelerate natural recovery.
- Educate and train resource managers and users in riparian system functions/values and sustainable management strategies.
- Address riparian resource issues and establish riparian management objectives in all phases of resource management planning.
- Monitor effectiveness and practice adaptive management.

- Acquire parcels with critical or unique riparian, wetland, or aquatic resource values where appropriate and available; acquire or protect water rights.
- Use a "watershed approach" in all phases of resource planning and management.

Key factors affecting goal achievement

Need input here.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- BLM, USFS, NRCS, and State University Extension agencies cooperate to deliver training and technical guidance to a diverse audience of private and public participants through the National Riparian Service Team.
- BLM, Tribes and private property managers cooperate to protect and restore riparian and aquatic "systems" by developing "watershed-scale" management strategies.
- BLM, NMFS, FWS, Tribes, and State wildlife agencies cooperate on management, mitigation, and monitoring of riparian, wetland, and aquatic habitat.
- BLM, USFWS, State wildlife agencies, and organizations such as Trout Unlimited, the Izaak Walton League, Ducks Unlimited, and many others pool financial resources to cooperatively fund restoration and protection projects.
- BLM, USFS, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), NPS, USFWS, the Department of the Army, and the Department of Defense cooperate in tracking and reporting restoration and improvement progress.

Program evaluations:

- Riparian program evaluation, April 1998. Implementation of recommendations resulted in the modification of numerical restoration goals and a focus on priority watersheds.

Long-Term Goal 2.3: By 2005, achieve an upward trend in the condition of BLM-administered uplands in 50 percent of the watersheds within priority subbasins.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- Apply treatments such as prescribed fires, invasive weed control, and vegetation manipulation/habitat treatments on a landscape scale in high-priority subbasins to increase the presence and improve the functionality of the biological and physical ecosystem components and to increase system resiliency.
- Restore natural ecological processes by increasing fuels treatments (wildland/prescribed fire and mechanical methods) to 425,000 acres annually.
- Foster periodic or rotational treatments of units within landscape-scale project areas to simulate the natural cycle of fire.

- Restore habitats in subbasins that need restoration to conserve multiple species of plants and animals, with priority given to those supporting special status species.
- Emphasize maintaining functioning and restoring functioning-at-risk systems by removing or mitigating human-caused stressors, controlling invasive species, and using native plants in restoration/rehabilitation efforts where practical.
- Limit the geographic expansion of invasive plants to zero (0) new net acreage per year by increasing integrated pest management treatments.
- Develop restoration plans, including weed management area plans, using watersheds or subbasins as basic units

Key factors affecting goal achievement:

- Goal achievement assumes that treatments can be designed to meet restoration objectives, protect and recover species listed under the Endangered Species Act, and meet Tribal treaty/trust responsibilities.
- Potential partners need to see that the Bureau is committed to successful weed management before they commit their resources to achieving this goal.
- If the BLM is not able to achieve the goal, rangeland conditions, including watershed and riparian areas, wildlife habitat and sensitive plant habitat will degrade. There will be increased conflict among wildlife, domesticated livestock, and wild horse and burro herds for reduced palatable forage.

Crosscutting relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

- The planning, design, implementation, and monitoring of restoration efforts will be conducted collaboratively with other Federal agencies, including the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and EPA, as well as with State and Tribal governments.
- The Bureau depends upon State and Federal regulatory agencies to obtain project clearances, and these agencies, in turn, depend upon the Bureau to maintain healthy ecosystems.
- The BLM cooperates with the Bureau of Reclamation, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Colorado River Basin States, and others in continuing to achieve reductions in upland loading of salts to tributary waters of the public lands (3,000 tons additional each year), thus contributing to meeting water quality standards for salinity at Hoover, Parker, and Imperial Dams.
- The window of opportunity to apply prescriptions is often very limited: when it occurs, Federal agencies depend upon each other and on the States to assist in handling the workload.
- The wildland fire community has sponsored the development of prescribed fire position qualifications/training standards, safety requirements, burn plan requirements, and nonreimbursement assistance agreements.

- The Bureau depends upon the National Weather Service to provide site-specific meteorological information.
- The Bureau works directly with private interest groups, such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and The Nature Conservancy, and with permittees to co-fund, plan, execute, and perform post-treatment monitoring and management activities.
- The BLM, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, many States and counties, and private landowners are already cooperative partners in managing invasive plants in limited areas. These partnerships could be developed for new areas, or increased to include additional land management agencies and organizations where partnerships already exist.
- The USGS's Biological Resource Division and the Agriculture Research Service could conduct invasive plant management research to develop more effective integrated pest management techniques.
- The Natural Resource Conservation Service could assist in education and outreach to private landowners.

Program evaluations:

- An FY1999 evaluation of the weed program validated current policy on invasive plant management and indicated a need to expand the program to reduce the average increase in weed-infested sites from 2,300 acres/day to zero (0) acres/day

Management Strategies to Improve Organizational Effectiveness

Accomplishing BLM's mission requires strong internal business and support service functions. Business services are complex and require significant resources. Management is making investments now so that the agency will work better in the future. Continuous improvement in managerial skills, workforce development, management tools, and products and services is the key to effectiveness and efficiency.

To be successful, the agency must have strong leadership-- leadership with the vision and management skills needed to carry out its various programs. The BLM must encourage teamwork, promote learning, and foster mutual respect among its employees and the public. It must also ensure that employees have the tools and skills needed to effectively complete required tasks. The Bureau's workforce is composed of almost 9,000 permanent, temporary, seasonal, and other employees in some 185 offices distributed across the country. BLM's workforce is often cited as a model for working effectively with communities, customers, and constituent groups.

The BLM manages far more public land acreage than any other Federal agency, and BLM's multiple-use mission is extremely complex and multifaceted. Yet the BLM has long had a reputation for making its funding go farther by working smarter and more efficiently. The agency is also known for the effective use of technology, data, process design, and good science to get the job done. Moreover, customers, stakeholders, and constituents are supportive of the workforce and are generally satisfied with the effort the BLM makes to manage the complex issues surrounding public lands.

BLM employs a balanced scorecard approach to strategic planning and performance measurement. This approach is based on the interaction between financial management, customer service, employee learning and growth, and the mission goals in BLM's Strategic Plan. The BLM has also established customer service-oriented goals in its Annual Performance Plans. These goals tie customer service to the Strategic Plan and measure progress toward the goals. Measuring customer feedback provides BLM with specific information on what needs improvement and also serves to measure customer outcomes.

BLM's leadership and workforce employ strategies to improve internal functions and operations that are critical to mission accomplishment. Recognizing the importance of communicating these strategies to the workforce and the interest that stakeholders have in the workings of the agency, the BLM has included organizational effectiveness in this revised BLM Strategic Plan. Strategies focus on the "means" rather than an outcome, as they are only indirectly related to mission. They address how BLM efficiently and effectively it accomplishes its mission. Our objectives are to:

- To provide excellence in customer service;
- To increase partnerships, challenge cost-share arrangements, and other collaborative efforts
- Develop management systems that improve accessibility, usability, and data for decision making;
- Recover appropriate costs of providing services;
- Improve the budget process so we can respond to changes in land and resource management, demographics, and cost management, and can better communicate the BLM story;

- Improve management and leadership, responding to the concerns raised in BLM employee surveys; and
- Improve the diversity and skills of BLM's workforce.

The BLM will not have performance measures specific to internal, means-oriented organizational effectiveness objectives. These goals receive funding through mission-oriented budget appropriations, and the outcomes are attributed to the mission goals identified in prior sections. Achievement of the internal objectives contributes indirectly to the mission, so these objectives are already accounted for.

Strategies to Improve Organizational Effectiveness

To improve the effectiveness of the organization and improve business practices, the BLM is implementing the following strategies:

- Provide cost-efficient, quality customer service. Determine existing levels of customer satisfaction, and seek ways of improving the products and services provided. Using customer feedback devices such as comment cards, focus groups, and surveys, BLM employees can get direct input on specific areas that require attention at all levels of the organization, while customers can provide helpful suggestions for improving a variety of processes, products, and other areas. The BLM is systematically collecting and assessing customer/stakeholder data on broad agency priorities, satisfaction with specific processes, and employee feedback. This assessment will help the BLM eliminate barriers to providing "best in business" customer service and achieve a high level of internal satisfaction.
- Leverage direct funding with in-kind contributions of materials, goods, labor, and services to help manage the public lands. The BLM uses partnerships to extend its capacity for work. Private parties, businesses, State and local governments, schools, and others contribute labor, services, and funding in-kind to complete special projects. These are known as Challenge Cost-Share projects. The more cost-sharing that the BLM participates in, the more funding the BLM has for on-the-ground work.
- Use a BLM Architecture (BA) for Information Resources Management to provide a road map to meet BLM mission needs. The BA is a strategic information asset base that defines the business information needed to operate the business, technologies needed to support the business operations, and transitional processes needed to implement new technologies in response to changing business needs.
- Provide managers and staff with mission-critical business information, including financial, performance, customer satisfaction, workforce, and employee survey data. Use BLM's Management Information System (MIS) to access information from a variety of sources over the Internet, including performance, finance, budget, and program-related data, e.g., recreation or facility records. Data can be retrieved and compared by local offices, which will improve managers' ability to use this important information for decision making. Data quality will be improved, and managers will use the system to access data for decision making and better management of costs and productivity.

- Institute strong information technology security measures and electronic records management practices to ensure the security and reliability of the information on which land use and business decisions depend.
- Recover appropriate costs of providing services. The BLM seeks to maintain the health of the land while allowing appropriate uses. However, managing the public lands for commercial and other uses such as recreation has an associated cost to the government. The BLM will measure the full costs recovered for rights-of-way, adopted horses and burros, conveyance of mineral interests, recordable disclaimers of interests, leases, repair of damaged lands, slash disposal, copy fees, road maintenance, mining claim recordation, mining law administration, special recreation fees, recreation fee collections, recreation fee demonstration areas, communication sites, and miscellaneous fees. The BLM will recover appropriate costs from users so that the benefitting user pays what otherwise would be funded by all taxpayers. Program personnel will be primarily responsible for developing cost recovery guidance and recommending policies.
- Integrate workforce planning and human resources management into strategic planning and business practices. As part of workforce planning, supervisors, managers, team leaders, and employees will identify critical occupational skills for the workforce, which has about 140 different job series. Core competencies will be defined and implemented in order to provide the foundation for human resource management based on key measurable knowledge, skills, and abilities. These competencies will assist in workforce development, recruitment, and selection.
- Increase the representation of minorities and women within planned and designated occupational series. Maintain a strong program of outreach, coordination, and appropriate cooperative initiatives with institutions of higher education under the umbrellas of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), as well as with other colleges and universities. Emphasize the use of the cooperative work/study authority under the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) in offices throughout the BLM to train prospective employees and complement workforce planning. Conduct workforce planning and employment program assessments on an annual basis, with concentration on factors such as the representation of minorities, women, and persons with disabilities by geographic area of assignment, by program assignment, and by grade level, making needed adjustments promptly and efficiently. Ensure that the BLM continues to hire the most qualified applicant from lists of diversified candidates. And finally, in accordance with standards established for management, apply accomplishments in workforce diversification to the performance goals and evaluations of managers and supervisors.

Crosscutting Relationships to other bureaus and agencies:

The Bureau of Land Management is working with other Department of the Interior bureaus on specific crosscutting goals. The Department has specified these goals and the role of each bureau in the Departmental Strategic Plan Overview.

The BLM is an active participant and leader in the Natural Resources Performance Management Forum, a voluntary group of planners representing some 20 agencies, bureaus, oversight agencies, and others. This group, which coordinates strategic planning and GPRA activities, is currently involved in defining its roles and the contribution each agency is making toward common natural resource outcomes. This information will be built into Annual Performance Plans and performance reports.

- The BLM works with other Federal natural resource agencies to share and manage data.
- Service First initiatives have been successfully deployed at the field level to provide one-stop shopping to customers by co-locating several State and Federal natural resource agencies in the same offices.
- The BLM works with other Interior bureaus to maximize procurement efficiency for a number of large purchases and to share technological advances in automated support systems.

Program evaluations:

A number of recent evaluations have focused on organizational efficiency issues:

- **Revenue Collections** In 1997, the OIG issued two reports concerning BLM revenue collections. A report on mineral patents concluded that the BLM was not recovering the costs of conducting mineral validity examinations, estimated to be \$29 million based on an average cost of \$80,000 per mineral patent application, and recommended that the BLM obtain a legal opinion as to whether it could recover these costs. The BLM agreed with the recommendations in the report and is taking steps to implement them.
- **Organizational Structure** GAO conducted a survey of the organizational structures of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Forest Service (FS) to determine the similarities of the two agencies. The results of this survey were issued in a Report to the Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, in July 1999 (GAO/RCED-99-227). The survey revealed that the "Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management are similar in many respects, including the agencies' missions and goals, the amount of land managed in the lower 48 states, the purposes for which the lands are managed, the types of employees hired, the location and type of offices maintained, the budget categories including the largest obligations, the activities performed under the budget categories, and the types of receipts generated." However, the agencies differ in magnitude and areas of concentration on the use of resources. The BLM provided the data needed for this survey. There were no recommendations and the audit is closed. However, the BLM and the USFS are co-locating offices as described in **Crosscutting Relationships to other Bureaus and Agencies**. The BLM is electing to participate in this effort to improve customer service and strengthen its collaboration with other agencies.

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